



## Lexington Conservation Caring for our public land



(tea colored water and foam @ Meagerville. Photo credit: Andrei Radulescu-Banu)

### Foam. Naturally occurring or pollution?

Have you come across tea colored water or suds in a river or stream? This phenomenon is usually due to natural seasonal processes, and is not due to environmental pollution. At the end of the season, when plants decompose the oils and tannins they contained are released and float to the surface. Water turbulence introduces air into the mix and bubbles form. It is quite common to find foamy dark colored streams during late fall and winter, when plant materials are decomposing in the water.

Some foam in water can indicate pollution. When deciding if the foam is natural consider the following:

- **Wind direction or turbulence** (is the foam only found downstream of turbulence?)
- **Proximity to a potential pollution source** (is there a construction site nearby?)
- **Composition** (are there decomposing plants or organic material in the water?)

### Idylwilde Community Garden Coordinator Needed for 2022!



Our current Community Garden Coordinator, who has helped the Community Gardens flourish for the past eight years, will be stepping down at the end of the 2021 season and we are looking for one or two people to fill this role going forward. If you are interested in volunteering for this position, email Conservation Coordinator, Amber Carr [acarr@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:acarr@lexingtonma.gov)

- **Feeling** (natural foam is usually persistent, light, and not slimy)

Ecological Land Management and Design Plan for

**Willard's Woods**

IN  
LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS



# Willards Woods Public Meeting!

The Conservation Commission will be reviewing the Willards Woods Ecological Land Management and Design Plan on 11/15/2021 @ 7:00 PM. JOIN US VIA ZOOM!

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89094143710?pwd=K29hVnp3WUU2QmtuQ0VYUjJ6djNtQT09>

Webinar ID: 890 9414 3710  
Passcode: 477643

[Read About the Project](#)

## Voice(s) Wanted

*Do you have a secret desire to capture your voice in history? Or do you have a friend that comes to mind?*

Conservation staff are wrapping up a wayside panel to install at the observation platform at Cotton Farm Conservation Area. Since we are trying to make the content of the sign accessible to as many people as possible, we want to include a QR code linked to an audio file so people are able to hear the content if they are visually impaired. We would also like to make an audio recording available in Mandarin.

If you would like to volunteer your voice - please contact our Conservation Coordinator, Amber Carr. [acarr@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:acarr@lexingtonma.gov)

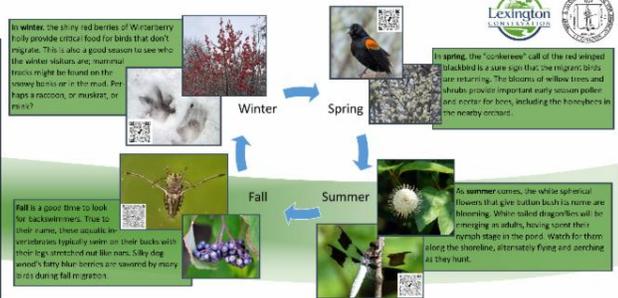
## Who needs a swamp anyway?



Once considered a nuisance and a health hazard in some areas, swamps - forested wetlands, even after flood or drought, it is estimated that we have lost 50% of the wetlands that existed in the continental U.S. in 3000 years. Ecological systems are vulnerable to climate change, and other contributing factors in their decline include population growth, agriculture, and development.

Who needs a swamp anyway? We all do! Wetlands are important because they provide a buffer to adjacent wetland flooding as well as support a rich, diverse environment that is habitat for many different species of plants and animals. Wetlands protect the water quality in lakes and ponds by filtering runoff from adjacent land, and help ensure an adequate water supply. In addition, wetlands capture and hold carbon, which helps to mitigate climate change. Massachusetts has one of the strictest wetland protection acts in our country.

Although this pond originally supplied irrigation for the adjacent orchard, it is now a protected and valuable resource to our community that provides habitat for many species of plants and animals, such as the barred owl pictured here that you may see perched in a nearby tree to roost or stalk prey.



## Stormwater Pollution Prevention Tips For

## Homeowners:

- Pick up after your pets
- Compost yard waste (leaves and grass clippings)
- Throw out trash in tied-garbage bags
- Don't put loose debris in truck beds
- Have regular maintenance performed on your vehicle and septic system
- Use fertilizer/insecticides sparingly
- Re-direct downspouts towards yards



## Leave the Leaves!

Provide habitat for local wildlife, save time and money by leaving the leaves on your property.

They provide nutritious mulch, overwintering habitat for insects and other wildlife, and you spend less energy and money collecting and sending leaves elsewhere.

[Read more here!](#)

## Native Or Cultivar?

### What Is A Cultivar?

Cultivars have been selectively bred by humans for aesthetic preferences. They are propagated by various asexual means, including division and tissue culture. That means, all plants belonging to a given cultivar are genetically identical.



Clethra alnifolia 'Ruby Spice'

### Why Does It Matter?

Cultivars are often less ecologically functional than natural species because the aesthetic characteristics they were selected for, come at the cost of ecologically important plant structures such as fertile flowers. **Cultivars contribute no genetic diversity to the populations of species from which they were derived, and do not contribute to resilience within the landscape.**

by Dan Jaffe (c) Native Plant Trust

### Ecologically Functional Plants:

- Feed insects, which pollinate the vast majority of flowering plants
- Provide food and habitat for wildlife
- Contribute to diversity among and within species

You can recognize that a plant is a cultivar by looking for a name placed in single quotes after the plant's latin name, e.g.:

Sweet Pepperbush

*Clethra alnifolia*  
'Ruby Spice'

American Arborvitae

*Thuja occidentalis*  
'Green Giant'

### List of Native Plants and Vendors

## Upcoming Events



### Meadow Preservation @ Daisy Wilson Meadow

**Sunday October 31st 9 A.M.-12 P.M.**  
**Sunday November 21st 9 A.M.-12 P.M.**

Join our Lead Stewards to continue work to reclaim meadow at Daisy Wilson Meadow.

Bring your own gloves, snack and water all other materials will be provided.

Park along Moreland Avenue and meet at the trailhead.

Lead Steward: Bonnie Newman  
[bjnewman@rcn.com](mailto:bjnewman@rcn.com)





## Conservation Walks

[Register and find out more](#)

### Turkey Trot Walk @ Whipple Hill

11/27 1:00- 3:00pm

Work off the excesses of your Thanksgiving dinner by joining CLC as it revives its annual Turkey Trot walk. Whipple Hill is especially scenic when the trees have lost their leaves revealing Whipple Hill's rugged landscape features and extensive stone walls. Befitting the highest spot in Lexington, there are extensive views in all directions from the bare summit. The trails are rugged with many ups and downs so hiking boots and walking sticks recommended.

Meet at the Johnson Road entrance on Winchester Drive. Park on Johnson Road as the parking lot is small. Heavy rain or snow cancels.

Walk Leader: Keith Ohmart (781-862-6216, [kohmart@verizon.net](mailto:kohmart@verizon.net))

### Have something to share?

This is the place for all things stewardship in Lexington, including upcoming volunteer work events, newly completed projects, local trainings and educational events, as well as news from the Lexington Conservation Office. Please e-mail [landstewards@lexingtonma.gov](mailto:landstewards@lexingtonma.gov), with submissions for our next edition.

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